A HISTORY OF THE MARCONI COMPANY, by W. J. Baker. 414 pages, diagrams, 6×9 in. Methuen, London, 1970. St. Martin's Press, New York, 1972. Price, $12.95. (approx. £6.40).

The contents of this book are designed to give a broad background in the technical development of wireless telegraphy and an insight to the development of the successful Marconi Company.

The technological level of this book can be comprehended by individuals with a background in basic physics and/or circuit theory and magnetism. An engineering student (second year) would find the contents easy to grasp.

Part I (169 pages) covers the role of Marconi and his company played in the initial formulations and subsequent developments in wireless telegraphy up to World War I. The first portion (20 pages) sketches contributions made by various well-known-engineers and physicists that enabled Marconi to develop the first wireless telegraph. A concise account of his early discoveries and numerous illustrations of his first wireless telegraph are presented in this portion of the book. The next area of the book (100 pages) covers the development of his company and the many problems it faced while competing with submarine cable telegraphy. The accounts of Marconi's discovery of syntonic tuning and the Poldhu antenna are discussed as Marconi continued to modify his wireless telegraph to increase its range. The remaining material of Part I (49 p.) goes over various incidents, such as disasters at sea, which showed the importance of wireless communication with vessels at sea before and during World War I.

Part II (120 p.) deals with the advancement of the Marconi Company after World War I, up to the time of Marconi's death. The initial material (20 p.) covers the contributions the Marconi Company made to the development of sound broadcasting in Britain. This is followed by accounts of Marconi's discovery of the use of the short-wave beam for long-range communications and the gamble the Company took when it decided to install short-wave beam stations to replace the old long-wave stations (30 pages). The next part (50 p.) covers the Marconi Company's contributions to the beginnings of television. This is followed by the tribute paid to the engineers of the Company, and a brief description of Marconi's final illness.

Part III (125 p.) covers the Marconi Company's involvement in World War II and afterwards up to its present existance. The first portion (45 p.) tells of the development of radar and the Company's role in World War II. The remaining 80 pages cover the Marconi Company's advancements in television, marine and aviation communications, and radar. This also includes the Marconi Company's status in Britain up to 1965.

Although the book is limited in its recognition of specific American developments in wireless telegraphy and related areas, it does comprise a good broad outline of the developments of commercial wireless telegraphy in general excellent specific account of the history of the British Marconi Company.

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